

June 29, 2006

US Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Civil Rights (1201A)
1200 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20460

RE: WESTERN WAKE PARTNERS (CARY, APEX, MORRISVILLE AND HOLLY SPRINGS, NC) SITING OF A PROPOSED SEWAGE PLANT IN A PREDOMINANTLY MINORITY, LOW INCOME NEIGHBORHOOD IN NEW HILL, NC.

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing to request your assistance with what I believe to be a clear violation of the principles of environmental justice. Four predominantly white, economically privileged towns have formed the "Western Wake Partnership" (WWP). The WWP hired several engineering firms to help determine the best regional plan to managing sewage treatment needs. The engineering firms provided a ranked list of potential sites, the top four of which were on lands previously condemned but not used by a public utility (previously known as Carolina Power and Light and currently named Progress Energy). Instead of selecting any of the top ranked sites, town employees decided instead to condemn a farm in a predominantly minority, low income neighborhood in New Hill, NC. To hide the fact they were acting in this manner, they used a census node that doesn't even include the entire parcel of condemned property as a reference population to compare to the population demographics of the WWPs. The census node includes approximately 48 square miles of land. The majority of the inhabitants of the census node will feel no ill effects from the construction of the plant.

The EPA website indicates the neighborhood selected to host the plant is between 40 and 100% minority. A door-to-door survey found the neighborhood to be 67% minority and examination of the Wake County voter registration records found it to be 59% minority (excludes determination of Hispanic ethnicity because this data had not been collected for the voter registration database).

Details of the community's concerns about environmental justice, errors in cost analysis and problems with the site selection process are detailed on the enclosed CD. The construction loan money that is being used in this project is predominantly from federal sources. Our little community desperately needs help from your office to stop this transgression of environmental justice.

